

Remarks

The Office Action found claims 15-18, 21-25, 29-32, and 34-45 allowable, found that claims 7-13 and 27 contained allowable subject matter if rewritten, and rejected the remaining claims (except for claims 46-48) based on U.S. patent 3,945,571 ("Rash") alone or Rash in combination with other art. Also, claims 46-48 were rejected based on U.S. patent 6,182,904 ("Ulczyński"). In view of the above amendment and the following remarks, reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Allowed Claims

Claims 15-18, 21-25, 29-32, and 34-45 have not been amended, and thus should remain allowable.

Claim 48

Claim 48 was included in the paragraph 6 rejection based on Ulczyński. Applicants believe that this was a mistake in the Office Action since claim 48 was made dependent on claim 44 in the last amendment and claim 44 was found in the Office Action to be substantively allowable. Hence, reconsideration of that finding is respectfully requested.

Objected To, But Substantively Allowable Claims

The subject matter of claims 7-13 and 27 were indicated to contain allowable subject matter if rewritten in independent form. In response, claim 7 subject matter has now been incorporated into claims 1 and 46, with claim 8 being made directly dependent on amended claim 1. Claim 7 has been canceled to avoid a redundancy issue. Hence, claims 1-6, 8-14, 19, 20, 26, 28, 46 and 47 all now include subject matter which the Office Action found important to allowability.

The Office Action also found claim 27 allowable if rewritten in independent form. The above amendment achieves this.

§ 103 Rejections

With respect to the obviousness rejections, as noted above, these have been addressed by incorporating allowable

subject matter into the rejected claims, or clarifying that a rejected claim is actually dependent on a claim already found substantively allowable. Hence, the obviousness rejections are believed to be overcome in this manner. Since this approach for addressing the obviousness issues merely incorporates subject matter previously searched by the examiner and found important to allowability, entry of this amendment is believed appropriate even in after final practice.

Conclusion

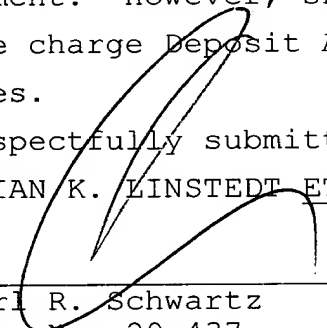
Amended claims 1-6, 8-32 and 34-48 are now believed to be in condition for allowance, and allowance of all of these claims (as amended) is respectfully requested. Because one additional independent claim is now proposed, please charge Deposit Account 17-0055 for \$86 for the amount of the fee for the additional claim.

Apart from this, no additional fees are believed to be required for entry of this amendment. However, should any additional fees be needed, please charge Deposit Account No. 17-0055 for the amount of the fees.

Respectfully submitted,
BRIAN K. LINSTEDT ET AL.

Date: May 28, 2004

By:



Carl R. Schwartz
Reg. No. 29,437
Quarles & Brady LLP
411 East Wisconsin Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53203
(414) 277-5715

MKE\5584652.1